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IHC-M-19
15 October 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, IHC
FROM: Executive Secretary, IHC
SUBJECT: SIGINT Information Handling

Introduction

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information concerning certain aspects of USIB approved guidance affecting COMINT data representing ^{ation} and dissemination. This guidance was developed by the Intelligence Guidance Subcommittee (IGS) of the SIGINT Committee, USIB (USIB-S-9.4/8, 23 July 1968, Limited Distribution).

Background

2. In July 1968 the USIB approved (with NSA dissenting) intelligence guidance for COMINT programming for several target entities. One part of this guidance calls for the development of information in machine readable form (USIB-S-9.4/8, page 17-17, Line Item 15 - see Attachment A). USIB directed that development of this information will be done in accordance with procedures and criteria "to be established under the aegis of the DCI."

Role of the IHC

3. The role of the IHC appears to be explicit in the last 12 words of Line Item 15. Careful examination of these 12 words indicate that three different problems are unresolved as of this

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NSA review(s) completed

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time. These problems can be summarized as: How, Where, and Form.

4. The "How" is implied in the word "transfer." Without adequate knowledge of details regarding the volume of data which could result from this tasking, one could infer that there is a lot of it. So the question of "How" this data is to be transmitted is pertinent. A corollary problem is the planned installation of a 2400 word-per-minute printer on CIA premises to replace the present four 100 word-per-minute printers on which data is obtained from NSA. It seems reasonable to ask if consideration is being given to using the additional print capability for this specific data. However, the basic question is: Does CIA, DIA, or State really wish to get this data in this fashion? Note that NSA is tasked to provide the data in "standard machine format." The implication is that machine processing is contemplated. Therefore, what processes are envisioned, and at what locations? This directly affects the transfer problem, i.e., "How."

5. "Where" is implied in the phrase "designated facilities". The question that comes readily to mind is: What is a facility? Who designates such facilities? Was the identification of facilities given careful consideration when this guidance paper was developed, or did the guidance personnel assume that the same facilities which received the digested product would also receive the raw product. If this kind of thinking and questioning

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has already been done, then the problem is one of reducing alternatives to paper for resolution by the production components. However, if the production units have not been made aware of the details regarding this change in volume and form of data, then a significant data gathering and concomitant user orientation effort is in order.

6. The third question implicit in this paragraph is "Form" which is implicit in the phrase "standard machine formats". Unfortunately, there is no such thing as a "standard machine format" within the intelligence community. One would have considerable trouble in even achieving interagency consensus on what these three words imply. The questions which come to mind are many, and a couple go as follows: What do you mean by a machine? If you mean a computer, do you mean an internal bit configuration, e.g., EBCDIC, or do you mean a standard for data communication, e.g., ASCII. Having failed through the years to instill in the community a desire to produce standards for their own use, legislative authorities are presently instituting government standards which the intelligence community will be forced either to accept, quickly institute their own standards, or prove that they should be exempt from such standards.

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7. Obviously the "How" relates closely to the "Where" and the "Form". There are a number of machine formats which are completely unacceptable as a means of communicating information to a human being, e.g., binary data. Is the thinking of those who want this data along the lines of an EDP processor for each designated facility? Clearly, we have many more questions than we have answers.

8. Returning to the corollary problem of a 6-fold increase in print capability, we should not ignore the fact that several people are approaching this aspect of data handling from the point of view of volume analysis. In other words, these people are not concerning themselves with the desirability of requirements levied by production units. Instead they are very simply asking, "How on earth can we handle that much more paper from NSA?" This question is the result of a very realistic interpretation of the law which says that when a communication capability is provided, all of that capability will be in use within a relatively short time. In accepting this premise these people become very concerned with the horrendous procedural problems of moving the paper from printer, to people, to burn bag and then to a destruction system which, in the case of CIA, is rapidly reaching its capacity limits.

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9. The corollary problem mentioned above is not one that can be ignored as things now stand. The solution to the requirements problem and ready answers to the How, Where, and Form questions could solve the corollary problem; however, these questions are not easily answered, and as a consequence, the installation of the high-speed printer and the inevitable flood of paper will have to be handled as a here and now headache long before the other problems have been satisfactorily resolved.

IHC/IGS Liaison

10. The IGS is currently in the process of developing guidance for several additional COMINT target entities. Requirements for COMINT are being formulated, which include development of machine readable information, and which are footnoted as item 15 is in Attachment A. In order to keep the IHC knowledgeable on these matters, I requested that the IGS include a member of the IHC Support Staff as an observer when these requirements are being discussed. The chairman of the IGS indicated approval of my request. Copies of this correspondence are in Attachment B (USIB-SC-5./55).

Programming Requirements

11. In order for NSA to define the resources required to respond to the approved USIB guidance in Attachment A hereto, it must first have IHC answers to the How, Where, and Form questions.

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The answers to these questions are essential to the process of building the model which will respond to the Board's guidance. Only after this model is developed can NSA define its resource requirements sufficiently for programming purposes.

Recommendation

12. Recommend that this paper be placed on the agenda of an IHC meeting for discussion.

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Executive Secretary

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ATTACHMENT A

The following is extracted from USIB-S-9.4/8, 23 July 1968,

Line Item 15:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 15. Develop and accumulate <u>a/</u> COMINT information <u>b/</u> for topics designated below and transfer to designated <u>d/</u> facilities of intelligence production organizations in standard machine formats <u>e/</u> | Unrefined <u>c/</u> data:
Within 48 hours
after close of
the intercept day

Refined <u>c/</u> data:
Within 45 days
after intercept date |
|--|--|

a/- Information will be retained for 45 days after transfer of refined data.

b/- Appropriate date/time identification will be included in all instances.

c/- Refinement of the data initially disseminated will be accomplished by NSA through deletion of redundant information and through introduction of SIGINT analysis in depth.

d/- In accordance with procedures to be established under the aegis of the DCI.

e/- In accordance with criteria to be established under the aegis of the DCI.

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UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD
INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION HANDLING COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM FOR: Members, IHC

SUBJECT: SIGINT Information Handling

1. The attached memorandum is forwarded to you for review and comments at the IHC meeting on November 6, 1968. The subject is the development and transfer of machine readable information obtained from SI sources. The intelligence community's need for this information is within the purview of the SIGINT Committee, USIB. The handling or transfer of the information is within the purview of the IHC. Portions of this guidance dealing with data handling and transfer should be carefully scrutinized in order to determine how it can best complement our efforts on information handling.

2. The SIGINT Committee's Intelligence Guidance Subcommittee (IGS) is the group responsible for formulating the intelligence guidance. The process of formulating this guidance is complex and involved. I suggest that you have your respective IGS member brief you on this process and supply you with the appropriate documents prior to our next meeting.

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